

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

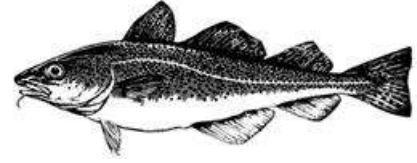
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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Aleutian Islands State-Waters Pacific Cod B Season Closure and Opening of Parallel Pacific Cod Season, EO # 4-GF-19-13

The state-waters Pacific cod B season in the Aleutian Islands District west of 170° W longitude, will close September 1, at 11:59 a.m. All state waters of the Aleutian Islands District west of 170° W longitude, will immediately reopen to commercial fishing for Pacific cod at 12:00 (noon) September 1, under parallel Pacific cod rules. The parallel fishery opening coincides with adjacent federal waters pot gear opening for catcher vessels over 60 feet in overall length targeting Pacific cod.. Fishermen must deliver all unprocessed Pacific cod retained during the state-waters season before participating in the parallel season. During a parallel Pacific cod season in the Aleutian Islands District between 175° W longitude and 178° W longitude, vessels may be no more than 60 feet in overall length using trawl, pot, jig and hand troll gear. Vessels using longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries may not be greater than 58 feet in overall length. Steller sea lion (SSL) closures in place prior to 2011 will be in effect between 175° W longitude and 178° W longitude during the parallel Pacific cod fishery. Steller sea lion closures for this area are located in Table 5 to 50 CFR part 679 (69 FR 75865, December 20, 2004), posted on the NMFS website <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/frules/fr75865.pdf> and refers to gear-specific closures around SSL haulouts in Alaska. Table 12 to 50 CFR part 679 (73 FR 76136, January, 2011), also posted on the NMFS website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/frules/73fr76136.pdf>, refers to SSL rookeries in Alaska closed to groundfish fishing within 3 nautical miles of the shoreline. Steller sea lion protection measures in place beginning 2011 will apply to the remainder of the Aleutian Islands District parallel Pacific cod fishery west of 170° W longitude.

Fishermen participating in the parallel fishery are required to complete a parallel groundfish registration and have a functioning vessel monitoring system onboard. Bycatch limits in the adjacent federal Pacific cod fishery will apply to the parallel Pacific cod fishery. The Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area and coral garden closures, in effect during the state-waters Pacific cod season, will also apply during the parallel season. Sector allocations in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) based on processing activity are not recognized in state waters, therefore when the parallel season is open, both catcher vessels and catcher processors may participate in the sector opening. For further information, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239.

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